

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 1. A collapsible container comprising:
2 a bottom panel defining a peripheral edge; and
3 a plurality of side panels, each side panel being mounted on the bottom
4 panel along a respective portion of the peripheral edge for pivoting movement about
5 a respective pivot axis, wherein a first side panel includes an outer face and a lateral
6 edge bordering the outer face, and a second side panel includes an inner face, a lateral
7 edge bordering the inner face, and a flange projecting from the inner face along at least
8 a portion of the lateral edge, the first and second side panels respectively pivoting to
9 a raised position relative to the bottom panel such that the flange overlies the outer face
10 as the lateral edge of the first side panel engages the lateral edge of the second side
11 panel,

12 wherein the first side panel includes a latch member having a base
13 portion mounted on the first side panel proximate to the lateral edge thereof, a lever
14 arm portion extending generally away from the lateral edge, and a first intermediate
15 portion disposed between the base portion and the lever arm portion, the first
16 intermediate portion including a first camming surface and a first shoulder adjacent to
17 the first camming surface, and

18 wherein the second side panel includes an inward projection having a
19 second camming surface and a second shoulder adjacent to the second camming
20 surface, the camming surfaces and shoulders being generally disposed at a same height
21 above the bottom panel when the first and second side panels are respectively pivoted
22 to the raised position.

1 2. The collapsible container of claim 1, wherein the inward
2 projection projects from the flange.

1 3. The collapsible container of claim 1, wherein the first side panel
2 includes a rib proximate to the lateral edge thereof extending generally perpendicular
3 to the pivot axis of the first side panel, and wherein the base portion of the latch
4 member is integrally formed with the rib.

1 4. The collapsible container of claim 3, wherein the second side
2 panel includes an interior corner defined by an intersection of the inner face and the
3 flange, and wherein the rib defines a substantially-continuous first length of a first
4 portion of the outer face of the first side panel, the first length of the first portion of the
5 outer face being received in the interior corner of the second side panel when the first
6 and second side panels are respectively pivoted to the raised position.

1 5. The collapsible container of claim 1, wherein the base portion
2 of the latch member includes a pair of spaced legs joined to the intermediate portion
3 on either side of the camming surface.

1 6. The collapsible container of claim 5, wherein the legs of the base
2 portion extend to respective positions outboard of the intermediate portion of the latch
3 member such that deflection of the latch member relative to the outer face of the first
4 side panel generates both flexural and torsional bending of each leg.

1 7. The collapsible container of claim 1, wherein the first side panel
2 includes at least one locating member projecting outwardly from the outer face
3 proximate to the first edge, and wherein the flange includes at least one socket adapted
4 to receive the at least one locating member when the first and second side panels are
5 respectively pivoted to the raised position.

1 8. The collapsible container of claim 1, wherein a first portion of
2 the peripheral edge of the bottom panel includes a recessed shelf, and wherein a basal
3 edge of one side panel pivots into engagement with the recessed shelf when the one
4 side panel is pivoted to the raised position.

1 9. The collapsible container of claim 8, wherein a second portion
2 of the peripheral edge of the bottom panel proximate the first portion includes a raised
3 flange that overlies the outer face of the one side panel when the one side panel is
4 pivoted to the raised position.

1 10. The collapsible container of claim 8, wherein the bottom panel
2 includes at least one integrally-molded, cantilevered stop member having a free end
3 surface extending in the direction of the first portion of the peripheral edge that
4 engages the basal edge of the one side panel when the one side panel is pivoted to the
5 raised position.

1 11. A collapsible container comprising:
2 a bottom panel having a peripheral edge, and
3 a plurality of side panels, each side panel being mounted on the bottom
4 panel along a respective portion of the peripheral edge for pivoting movement about
5 a respective pivot axis between a collapsed position and a raised position, each side
6 panel including a pair of diametrical lateral edges, each side panel pivoting to a raised
7 position relative to the bottom panel such that each lateral edge of a given side panel
8 interlockingly engages a lateral edge of an adjacent side panel,
9 wherein one side panel includes an outer face and a basal edge
10 bordering the outer face, wherein one portion of the peripheral edge of the bottom
11 panel includes a recessed shelf, and
12 wherein a basal edge of the one side panel pivots into engagement with
13 the recessed shelf when the one side panel is pivoted to the raised position.

1 12. The collapsible container of claim 11, wherein a second portion
2 of the peripheral edge of the bottom panel proximate the first portion includes a raised
3 flange that overlies the outer face of the one side panel when the one side panel is
4 pivoted to the raised position.

1 13. The collapsible container of claim 11, wherein the one side
2 panel includes an inwardly-facing abutting surface proximate to the basal edge, and
3 wherein the bottom panel includes at least one integrally-molded, cantilevered stop
4 member having a free end surface extending in the direction of the first portion of the
5 peripheral edge that engages the inwardly-facing abutting surface of the one side panel
6 when the one side panel is pivoted to the raised position.

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1 14. The collapsible container of claim 11, wherein a first side panel
2 includes an outer face,
3 wherein a second side panel adjacent to the first side panel includes an
4 inner face and a flange projecting from the inner face along at least a portion of one
5 lateral edge thereof, the first and second side panels respectively pivoting to the raised
6 position such that the flange overlies the outer face as the one lateral edge of the first
7 side panel engages one lateral edge of the second side panel, and
8 wherein the first side panel includes at least one locating member
9 projecting outwardly from the outer face proximate to the one lateral edge, and wherein
10 the flange includes at least one socket adapted to receive the at least one locating
11 member when the first and second side panels are respectively pivoted to the raised
12 position to maintain the engagement of the basal edge of the one side panel with the
13 recessed shelf when the one side panel is pivoted to the raised position.

1 15. The collapsible container of claim 14, wherein the first side
2 panel includes a latch member having a base portion mounted on the first side panel
3 proximate to the one lateral edge thereof, a lever arm portion extending generally away
4 from the lateral edge, and a first intermediate portion disposed between the base
5 portion and the lever arm portion, the first intermediate portion including a first
6 camming surface and a first shoulder adjacent to the first camming surface, and
7 wherein the second side panel includes an inward projection having a
8 second camming surface and a second shoulder adjacent to the second camming
9 surface, the camming surfaces and shoulders being generally disposed at a same height
10 above the bottom panel when the first and second side panels are respectively pivoted
11 to the raised position.

1 16. The collapsible container of claim 15, wherein the inward
2 projection projects from the flange.

1 17. The collapsible container of claim 15, wherein the first side
2 panel includes a rib proximate to the lateral edge thereof extending generally
3 perpendicular to the pivot axis of the first side panel, and wherein the base portion of
the latch member is integrally formed with the rib.

1 18. The collapsible container of claim 15, wherein the base portion
2 of the latch member includes a pair of spaced legs joined to the intermediate portion
3 on either side of the camming surface.

1 19. The collapsible container of claim 18, wherein the legs of the
2 base portion extend to respective positions outboard of the intermediate portion of the
3 latch member such that deflection of the latch member relative to the outer face of the
4 first side panel generates both flexural and torsional bending of each leg.

1 20. A collapsible container comprising:
2 a bottom panel having a peripheral edge; and
3 a plurality of side panels, each side panel being mounted on the bottom
4 panel along a respective portion of the peripheral edge for pivoting movement about
5 a respective pivot axis between a collapsed position and a raised position;
6 wherein one side panel includes a basal edge, and an inwardly-facing
7 abutting surface proximate to the basal edge; and
8 wherein the bottom panel includes at least one integrally-molded stop
9 member having a complementary surface that engages the inwardly-facing abutting
10 surface of the one side panel when the one side panel is pivoted to the raised position.

1 21. The collapsible container of claim 20, wherein the stop member
2 includes a cantilevered portion extending in the direction of a first portion of the
3 peripheral edge proximate to the basal edge of the side panel, and wherein the
4 complementary surface of the stop member is defined on a free end of the cantilevered
5 portion.

1 22. The collapsible container of claim 20, wherein a second portion
2 of the peripheral edge of the bottom panel proximate the first portion includes a raised
3 flange that overlies the outer face of the one side panel when the one side panel is
4 pivoted to the raised position.

1 23. The collapsible container of claim 20, wherein a third portion
2 of the peripheral edge of the bottom panel includes a recessed shelf, and wherein the

3 basal edge of the one side panel pivots into engagement with the recessed shelf when
4 the one side panel is pivoted to the raised position.

1 24. The collapsible container of claim 22, wherein the one side
2 panel includes a lateral edge and an outer face bordering the lateral edge, and wherein
3 another side panel includes a lateral edge having a flange that overlies the outer face
4 of the one side panel when the panels are in the raised position, whereby the flange of
5 the other side panel prevents further relative outward movement of the lateral edge of
6 the one side panel.